

**UNRRA SELECTED RECORDS AG-018-028:
SWITZERLAND MISSION, 1944-1949**

2016.143.1.

RG-67.057M

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Descriptive summary

Title: UNRRA Selected Records AG-018-028: Switzerland Mission

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The finding aid for the materials housed at the United Nations can be found at:

https://archives.un.org/sites/archives.un.org/files/files/Finding%20Aids/2015_Finding_Aids/AG-018-028.pdf

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed, see archives catalog at collections.ushmm.org for further information.

Processing history: Finding aid adapted from inventory provided by the United Nations Archives and Records Management Service by Aleksandra Borecka July 2016

Administrative history

The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was an international relief agency, largely dominated by the United States but representing 44 nations. Founded in 1943, it became part of the United Nations in 1945, and it largely shut down operations in 1947. Its purpose was to "plan, coordinate, administer or arrange for the administration of measures for the relief of victims of war in any area under the control of any of the United Nations through the provision of food, fuel, clothing, shelter and other basic necessities, medical and other essential services". Its staff of civil servants included 12,000 people, with headquarters in New York. Funding came from many nations, and totaled \$3.7 billion, of which the United States contributed \$2.7 billion; Britain \$625 million and Canada \$139 million. The Administration of UNRRA at the peak of operations in mid-1946 included five types of offices and missions with a staff totaling nearly 25,000: The Headquarters Office in Washington, The European Regional Office (London), the Twenty-nine servicing offices and missions (2 area offices in Cairo and Sydney; 10 liaison offices and missions in Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Trieste; 12 procurement offices in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Cuba, India, Mexico, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela; 6 offices for procurement of surplus military supplies in Caserta, Rome, Honolulu, Manila, New Delhi, Paris, Shanghai), the sixteen missions to receiving countries (Albania, Austria, Byelorussia, China, Czechoslovakia, the Dodecanese Islands, Ethiopia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Korea, the Philippines, Poland, Ukraine, Yugoslavia), and the Displaced Persons Operations in Germany.

UNRRA cooperated closely with dozens of volunteer charitable organizations, who sent hundreds of their own agencies to work alongside UNRRA. In operation only three years, the agency distributed about \$4 billion worth of goods, food, medicine, tools, and farm implements at a time of severe global shortages and worldwide transportation difficulties. The recipient nations had been especially hard hit by starvation, dislocation, and political chaos. It played a major role in helping Displaced Persons return to their home countries in Europe in 1945-46. Its UN functions were transferred to several UN agencies, including the International Refugee Organization and the World Health Organization. As an American relief agency, it was largely replaced by the Marshall Plan, which began operations in 1948.

Switzerland Mission. Since Switzerland adhered to a policy of strict neutrality in the War, the Government considered that it could not become a member of UNRRA nor recognize that organization officially, because it was formed by a group of belligerent powers. The Swiss authorities indicated in May 1944, however, that they would be glad to receive an American private citizen and assist him in transacting business with which UNRRA might entrust him. The staff of the Switzerland Mission remained very small and it was located in offices provided in the Palais des Nations in Geneva. Its functions were quite limited, since Switzerland was not a receiving country and made only one minor official contribution to UNRRA. The Mission concerned itself primarily with liaison between UNRRA and the Swiss Authorities, the League of Nations, and various international and Swiss voluntary organizations. The Mission also collected and reported information concerning relief activities in Switzerland and data concerning various types of relief supplies procurable from private sources in Switzerland. It also assisted in the recruitment of doctors and nurses for UNRRA, and the shipment of relief supplies (particularly medical and veterinary supplies) from and through Switzerland, and in making the necessary administrative arrangements and official contacts for persons holding UNRRA fellowships to study in Switzerland and for UNRRA staff members in connection with the Fifth Council Session and the Meeting of the Preparatory Commission for the International Refugee Organization. The work of the Mission was concluded and its office was closed as of. 31 August 1947.

[Source: Original finding aid of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA)]

Scope and content of collection

Selected files of the Switzerland Mission (S-1405), 1944-1949: Records include statistics, correspondence, files of displaced persons, lists of children, offers of temporary asylum for children, movement of children to Switzerland, Red Cross actions and personal inquiries requesting tracing of individuals, as well as reports on activities of the UN relating to refugees and displaced persons.

System of arrangement

Selected records arranged in one series:

1. Switzerland Mission, 1944-1949 (Box S-0527-1122 and S-0527-1124).

Indexing terms

Corporate Name:

United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration--History.
Société générale de surveillance.
Verband Schweizerischer Jüdischer Flüchtlingshilfen.
Poland. Poselstwo (Switzerland)
Polski Czerwony Krzyż.
Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Spain. Consulado (Switzerland)

Genre/Form:

Certificates.
Correspondence.
Registers.
Reports.
Statistics.
Telegrams.

Geographic name:

Bern (Switzerland)
Engelberg (Obwalden, Switzerland)
Geneva (Switzerland)
Harsenberg (Switzerland)
Krattigen (Switzerland)
Sumiswald (Switzerland)
Switzerland--Politics and government.
United States--Politics and government.
Zurich (Switzerland)

Topical Term:

War relief--United States--History--20th century.
World War, 1939-1945--Refugees--Jewish--Switzerland.
Refugees--Legal status, laws, etc.--Switzerland.
Children--Institutional care--Switzerland.
Humanitarian assistance--Switzerland--History--20th century.
Humanitarian assistance, American--Political aspects.
Holocaust Jewish (1939-1945)--Europe--History.

CONTAINER LIST

Note: Due to the EAD project of the United Nations Archives and Records Management Section (UN-ARMS), some of the boxes have been assigned to new series.

This description is based on the finding aid compiled by the United Nations Archives and Records Management Section (Holder of originals). The original finding aid are located at:

UN finding aid:

https://archives.un.org/sites/archives.un.org/files/files/Finding%20Aids/2015_Finding_Aids/AG-018-028.pdf

AG-018-028 Switzerland Mission

Selected Records

Box	Folder	Title	Pages
S-0527-1122 whole box	S-1405-0000-0019	General Files-D.P. in Switzerland (Statistics) 1944-1949 [1947]	1000
	S-1405-0000-0020	General Files-Jewish D.P. to be evacuated from Switzerland 1944-1949	
	S-1405-0000-0021	General Files - Food Parcels 1944-1949	
	S-1405-0000-0022	General Files-Action in Romania and Red .Cross in Greece 1944-1949	
	S-1405-0000-0023	General Files-Correspondence with Société Générale de Surveillance 1944-1949	
	S-1405-0000-0024	General Files-Red Cross 1944-1949	
	S-1405-0000-0025	General Files-Plans and Action of Don Suisse 1944-1949	
S-0527-1124 whole box	S-1405-0000-0032	General Files-Displaced Persons 1944-1949 [1946]	300
	S-1405-0000-0033	General Files-Displaced Persons 1944-1949	
	S-1405-0000-0034	General Files-Displaced Persons Children 1944-1949	
	S-1405-0000-0035	General Files-Displaced Persons Children 1944-1949	
	S-1405-0000-0036	General Files-Displaced Persons Children 1944-1949	
	S-1405-0000-0037	General Files-Personal Inquiries 1944-1949	1300